

THE Spiritual Magazine.

JULY, 1869.

ON MIRACLES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.

THE OUTBURST OF SPIRITUALISM.

THIS is a great subject, which can be noticed in this place only just as it illustrates the line of thought in these essays.

The phenomena of Spiritualism, even the simpler, are very curious in themselves; but they are important mainly for the method which is in them, and for the philosophy which they involve. Witchcraft was no good in its day, certainly; "but," said John Wesley, "to give up witchcraft is to give up the Bible." And similarly, to gainsay the possibility of Spiritualism is to repudiate the spiritual philosophy of the Scriptures. The writer hereof has what is for him an opinion about Spiritualism, but it would need the space of a volume in which to justify, as well as unfold it; and therefore any mention of it here should be taken, just as it is made, merely by way of allusion, and for the special points indicated.

How vast and various is the universe, even to human apprehension! The infinity surrounding them, men are ready enough to remember for glory, but not for humility. And so, under the lamp-light of history, merely, some great philosophers shew very strangely as critical occupants of the universe. So, often, on one subject or another, have even great men shown themselves to be as blind as ants in a hillock. What would ants be the wiser, if along side of their hill there were a highway of commerce reaching to the ends of the world, or an observatory, by which, as to view, the heavens are brought down? It is true that emmets are born with the knowledge which they need, and that human beings are born to the knowledge into which they are to grow. Yet still many men are as blind as ants to

"the balancings of the clouds"; and many immortal souls have their faculties for understanding and belief fast closed against evidences of the spiritual universe about them. And as to the things of the spirit, and the philosophy of the spiritual world, and the ongoings of the spiritual universe, there are still those even, who can "see and not perceive," and who are altogether amenable to the remonstrance, "Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not?"

Is it, indeed, true philosophy which thinks that every fresh suggestion from the universe must be just what might have been looked for? And as to signs and effects from the spiritual world, is mere probability any kind of a rule by which for souls to judge, who themselves are but of yesterday's creation? Yet there are people who are confident as to the possibilities of the universe, merely through their own feel of it. But even though his five senses be sharpened to the utmost, and be helped by every kind of instrument and contrivance, yet what is any man for a judge as to the likelihoods of a universe; which appeals not to five senses only, but perhaps to five hundred faculties! And the claim of Christianity is that the soul has senses or sensibilities for channels and quarters, outside of the range of what is technically called science.

In the *Recognitions of Clement*, that oldest of Christian novels, says Simon Magus, "While all sensations possible belong to one of the five senses, that Power, which is superior to all things, cannot add any new one." But to this it is replied by Peter, "That is false: for there is a sixth sense, that of prescience; for the other five senses are capable only of knowledge; but the sixth of foreknowledge, which sense the prophets had." As being a spirit imprisoned in a body, a man has extra-mural relations; and as a living soul he has super-sensual susceptibilities. And so it might seem to be, in itself, anything but incredible, if now and then some soul should have something to report as to some foregleam of immortality; or as to some glimpse faintly caught of the scenery or the company, to which it is itself predestined; or as to occurrences as fitful as the aurora of the north, and as wayward as the lightning, and which, for earthly effect, start perhaps from the meeting-point, between spirit and matter; and which point, it may be, is more mysterious than even spirit itself is.

To what can the outbreak of what is called "Spiritualism" be likened for effect? On the world at large, it has been as though a ghost had appeared at a sitting of the Royal Society, in London. But a thing may seem to be out of place, because, really the observer himself is out of his own proper place. And many Christians have been startled, provoked,

and confounded by "Spiritualism," because of the extent to which they themselves were out of place, intellectually and religiously. Not improbably, if Christians had been such believers as they ought to have been, the thing which technically is called Spiritualism, might never have been manifested amongst them. Near Jerusalem, once, if the multitude of the disciples had not praised God, the stones might immediately have cried out. The testimony of the stones would not perhaps have been very edifying, except by being very startling. Even though the various conditions necessary to the phenomena of Spiritualism are not well known, yet it is conceivable and it is highly probable that, if the atmosphere of the Christian Church had been what it ought to have been, instead of there being mediums and their attendant marvels in the world, there would to-day have been in the Church the manifestation of the Spirit, and one good man would have been full of the Holy Ghost, and another man, perhaps, would have seen visions, and still another would have abounded in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost; while for the public benefit, one man would have shown the gift of healing, and another have been endowed with the word of wisdom, as a gift. As it is, however, some of the more material of the spiritualistic phenomena, such as noises, are as though the stones cried out, to assure men that really they are not as much at home in the universe as they fancied,—that there may be qualities, and ways, and a soul in the universe, such as they have never thought of,—and that themselves instead of being altogether self-sufficient, actually that they are but like bubbles made of the will of God and spared of his mercy.

There is a philosophy, and that, too, of fervent Christians, which would have taken up at its very commencement, this portentous subject of Spiritualism, as a very little thing,—the philosophy of Henry More and Ralph Cudworth, and a long ascending line of scholars, reaching up to the fathers, and in amongst the foundations of the Church. From this philosophy, which implied the co-existence of two worlds for man, one for the body and another for the spirit, thinkers have been greatly estranged, during the last century, because of the inordinate and disproportionate attention which has been drawn to the material world, by the novelty and multitude of its disclosures, scientifically. But the more that the range of the five senses is explored, and the more definitely it is ascertained what the properties are of which matter is susceptible, the more certain it becomes that in the universe there is a causative power, transcending what the sun and moon have ever felt, and of which man is an object.

Spiritualism ought to be nothing novel or strange to a theologian, and would not be but for the anomalous state of theology itself. Men have been so intent, so long, on splitting hairs metaphysically, for theological use, that almost the breadth itself of theology has been forgotten. By the modes which are called Spiritualistic, people are to-day communicating with spirits from a plane which is common to them, with the Chinese, the Esquimaux, and the aborigines of Australia, and probably with the prophets of ancient Greece, and the priests of ancient Rome, and with the last philosophic survivors of Hellenism. And if any Christians think, that thereby there is over them the supremacy of heavenly illumination, by that much at least, they may believe themselves, as before heaven, to be standing apart from where the early Christians stood.

All the preceding remarks will hold true by those laws of evidence, by which still higher things than Spiritualism, will be judged, a hundred years hence. For what is under our eyes, proverbially, is the last thing to be noticed. But when with the recession of time, it has got to be viewed on the plane of history, along with other distant even though more important objects, then it becomes what cannot so easily be overlooked. And it will certainly be well for some persons, if by fairness or spiritual receptiveness they should be enabled to anticipate the use of that information, which is certain to pass on to the next generation, if possibly in no other way, then certainly as an unopened letter, wonderful in itself, but more wonderful still, perhaps, as having never been minded when it was written.

Rightly considered, though more fully than is possible here, the manner in which the announcement of the phenomena commonly called Spiritualistic, was received, is almost as instructive as the manifestations themselves. For it is only by an invincible inward anti-supernaturalism, which has grown with them from childhood, that commonly men of ordinary sense, have been able to withstand the multitudinous testimony, which exists as to some of the simpler phenomena which are Spiritualistic. Nor is it out of his own strength, nor yet out of his own weakness, that a man is able to contradict, as he sometimes does, but it is from the spirit of his age, from the breath which he draws of public opinion, and from his being one of a banded host. And this remark is made quite independently of what the thing called Spiritualism, may be in itself, whether sense or nonsense, and whether good, bad, or indifferent. "Spiritualism is the work of evil spirits," says one, who had never in his life before had a word to say about devil, or evil spirits, and into whose theological mind never a thought of one could have entered, but

as a ready way of answering what he was not prepared to argue. Says another, "It is either the devil, or else it is imposture, or else it is all a misunderstanding by the people concerned." This might be the judgment of some personage standing aback and above the origin of all philosophy and all action on this earth, but for the comments which are adjoined, and which shew that the utterance was simply a superficial view of possible chances on the subject, and made by a man who knew that he did really know nothing at all about it. So again there was once a warning against Spiritualism given from the text, "And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God?" The warning was well meant, and much of it was good. But in the ear of reason, it was all spoiled, when there was added to it, from conscientiousness, that really there never had been any "familiar spirits," and that their mention in the Scriptures, was only by way of accommodation to the prejudices of ignorant times. And so it was, that a theologian thought he was denouncing from the Scriptures, what all the while was actually corroborating the Scriptures against him.

Often overwhelmed by evidence, and unable to deny the reality of the phenomena of Spiritualism, people say, "Well, what of it! what does it all show?" To which the answer is simple enough, though it cannot always be made for fear of discourtesy, that, "The Spiritualistic phenomena are fairly and properly for intelligent persons, and fully as much so as algebra, or trigonometry, or logarithms." Says one, "I have no doubt that in the presence of some persons, called mediums, tables dance and are rapped upon, and in fact, I know it: and I have no doubt that persons have been raised into the air, without any human agency, because of what I have been told. And I will acknowledge that the secret thoughts of my mind have been recognized and published, in a way which I could not have believed, and could hardly have wished. And it is all very funny: but what of it?" And this is sometimes said as confidently, as though the intellectual system of the universe would echo the words and say, "What of it?"

And what of the theology which talks in that way, what of that? What else can it be than a mere semblance of something, the mere ghost of a faith, a shell empty alike of learning, sense, and earnestness? The phenomena of Spiritualism acknowledged to be real, and yet scorned as being unimportant, unsuggestive, meaningless, and unworthy of theological notice! What flippancy! What mere blind leadership of the blind, such theology must be! What a fantastic trick before high

heaven! "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." As to the significance of those phenomena, it is enough to say, that by them, Bishop Douglass, with his great name in theology, would have been amazed, as though by a latter-day revelation; and that Hugh Farmer, formerly the great authority as to miracles, would have found himself thereby flatly contradicted on important points, though not much to his grief, because of the good, honest man he was.

St. Bonaventura while writing the life of St. Francis of Assissi, and entranced in thought, was, according to history, seen to rise in the air. And Thomas Aquinas, who happened accidentally to be a witness of the marvel, said, "Let us leave a saint to write for a saint." This anecdote has been much ridiculed, and yet it has a wide kindred in history. Thus it is said that Ignatius Loyola was seen in prayer, to be raised more than a foot from the ground, saying "O my God! O my Lord! Oh that men knew thee!" But for persons, who would wish to belong to the communion of saints, whether with or without a pope, it would seem to be important and interesting, if anything might enable them to believe, instead of harshly denying, what implicate such names as Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas.

According to Farmer, in his "Essay on Miracles," a human body raised into the air, without any human agency whatever would be a real and evident miracle, because contrary to the known course of nature. A man may affirm a thing to be true, and say, "What of it?" But if he affirms that to be true, which Hugh Farmer could not imagine as possible except by the direct intervention of God, the man may be certain that he has done a great thing, whether he knows it or not, or whether he knows or does not know how to make use of his own knowledge. The levitation of the body is affirmed in history, in regard to persons canonized as saints, and also as to people accused of witchcraft, and it has been again and again published as to Pope Pius the Seventh. At present, for almost all Protestant eyes, even when acknowledged as being probably true, it is an incongruous fact, but surely it ought not therefore to be despised as useless; but rather it should be reverentially remembered, as likely some day to flash light on the mystery of the connection between the soul and the body. And indeed it is really anything but ridiculous to think of, by a person of reading and of good common sense and earnestness; and if it does not immediately teach anything, it may yet draw one up into the mount of contemplation, whence things have a different look to what they have in the common world below, and whence too the laws of nature seem but like the surface, and

not the soul of things—a surface perhaps of a lake, on which for ripple and figure, and glancing sheen, it is because “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.” And it may be added that also the remaining clause of the text is true, not only as to the conversion of a man morally, which properly it means, but also as to the change, which a man may, and often does experience as to his estimate of nature and science, under a vivid sense of what is omnipotent and omniscient—“So is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

“And what of it?” Many good people have said, while acknowledging that in connection with what is called Spiritualism, their secret thought had been recognized and answered through many secret windings; as though such a fact were nothing more than the capricious barking of a dog, as to significance. In a recent theological work, Dr. Walter Scott says about some printed account of a boy, who was supposed to be a demoniac, and to have been sensible of an adjuration, even when only addressed to him in the secrecy of the mind, “I would ask, are we warranted by either Scripture or reason, to believe that any evil spirit, even if it had been Satan himself, can know the thoughts, the most secret workings and prayers of the heart, in the way in which this is supposed to have been done? I must think that we are not.” The theology of Dr. Scott, in the history of opinion, is what dates mainly from St. Augustine. And the writings of Augustine should have instructed him differently from that statement of his, and by the saint’s personal experience.

The previous quotation is contained in a work, highly important at least as to the auspices under which it was published, and the man who knows anything differently, and thinks nothing of it, stands opposed simply by information to people whose looks would astonish him, if they were assembled about him, in their multitude and respectability. And if such a man should further wish to try out of the present age, and in the last, the importance of what though real, he accounts as worthless, then let him listen to a remark of Jortin on Ecclesiastical History. “It seems to be beyond the abilities of any created being to know the thoughts of a man, particularly of a man who is agitated by no passion, and gives no indications of his mind by any outward sign.” Such a different thing it is, for a man to talk just out of himself, and for a momentary purpose, from being ready to hold his position in full view of history and men of earnest thought.

It may be, that two persons might be found of the same school in philosophy, according at least to the words, in which

one would claim fellow-belief with the other ; and of these two, one would say that the phenomena of Spiritualism are impossible, while the other would say that they are as meaningless as the miracles of the Scriptures, which may or not be true. Hence it might seem as though the occurrence of an impossibility might be nothing wonderful.

One man, with the first report of the simpler phenomena of Spiritualism, exclaims "That is the Devil." And another, with the first certain communication of something, which could not be other than preternaturally given, exclaims, "The heavens are open again." And besides these, there are the large classes who say, some in one way, and some in another, but all of them conjointly what is tantamount to this—"Ah, well, very likely, no doubt, but perhaps there is possibly, no knowing truly, so to say, anything about anything."

In such an atmosphere of thought, spiritually, as almost all people would seem to be living in, so thin, and hazy, and uninspiring, so dead and bewildering, it might seem, as though for a theologian, anything spiritual, even though it might really be devilish, ought to be useful, as enabling him perhaps to find his whereabouts, or, as the French say, "to face the East ;" though certainly it could not aid him to do so, unless by nature or grace, he might happen to be ready for the guidance.

It is sometimes pronounced, as though judicially, for a verdict, "By acclamation of the public, Spiritualism is a thing which cannot be entertained for a moment." But now how is this pretended verdict ever supposed to be made up? It is agreed upon by people who do not agree among themselves, even as to the facts concerned. One party says, "By the laws of nature, what is called Spiritualism is impossible, and therefore it is not a subject to be entertained for a moment." Another party says, "Spiritualism is true, horribly and fearfully, and therefore as a subject of thought cannot be entertained for a moment." And a third party says, "The intuitions of the individual mind are for the individual. And therefore also for the public, as far as the public may be complicated with his individuality, the intuitions of the individual are supreme. And from outside, whatever would conflict with the supremacy of intuition, may be accounted extraneous, intrusive, and like Spiritualism, a thing not to be entertained for a moment." And a fourth party says, "The Bible is enough for us, and as we have not time for everything, Spiritualism cannot by us be entertained for a moment." Strange parties these, to a common verdict. Parties who disagree about the facts concerned, and who yet are summed up together for apparently a unanimous opinion.

But whatever Spiritualism may be, it has had a singular, instructive effect, by the remarks which it has elicited from philosophers taken by surprise; from "children tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine;" from self-opinionated men, exasperated by the rebelliousness of facts against them; and by theologians, who with denying the possibility of Spiritualism, have suddenly found themselves flatly opposed to the Bible. For both theology and philosophy have been woefully at fault about Spiritualism; which however they never would have been, only that first they had themselves become egregiously faulty, by having become too set in doctrine, and by having thereby largely foregone the perception and the love of facts, as evolved by daily experience, or as recorded in history.

While he was a Jew, Neander was turned towards Christianity by the Pedagogue of Plutarch. This incident was a sign of the times, really. For by an old Pagan was done unintentionally what all the Christian apologists of the day, might have attempted in vain. For by timidity and by the taint of anti-supernaturalism in many places, Christianity has been so weakened and attenuated, as that it cannot be spiritually or intellectually attractive for persons of intelligence. And indeed by a man of spiritual insight and critical faculty, there is more Christianity to be distilled out of Paganism itself, than some theologians seem able to find in all the New Testament.

Belief in a spiritual world, as the early Christians felt it, has become so much weakened by sickly intellectualisms of materialistic kinship, that really what the earliest disciples eschewed, might serve, to-day, as a first lesson in pneumatology, for many learned Christian divines. Many believers in Spiritualism, are as ignorant as other people, and some of them as ignorant perhaps as Abyssinian Christians. But the Spiritualism of the most ignorant Spiritualist persuades him of his personal knowledge, that the demonology of the New Testament was true.

As has been stated before, Spiritualism is not of any particular church or creed, any more than a telescope is, or an electric telegraph, or a badly kept post-office, or a miscellaneous library. But just as Paganism itself might help to make some Christian believers to be better believers than they are, so even Spiritualism might avail theologically for some distinguished divines. And truly such is the spiritual ignorance of this highly scientific age, that "an unclean spirit," fit only for exorcism in ancient times, would to-day for importance in almost any theological school, be like the opening of a revelation; for a real,

earnest belief in the demoniacs of the New Testament would necessitate the formation of a pneumatology of the Scriptures, for want of which, to nearly all readers, the sentences of the Bible hold together often but like ropes of sand.

And "a certain damsel possessed by the spirit of divination"—if anything to-day might make her seem, by analogy or otherwise, to have been exactly what the words of the Biblical writers say, then there would be many an honest doctor of divinity, on that knowledge, who could confess, that what little pneumatology he might have, was wrong; and also his philosophy of religion; and also really that inspiration was a truer thing than he had ever thought. But now the account of that girl with the spirit of Pytho, in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, is to be believed in, according to Spiritualism, exactly as it is written, and not stupidly, but with a lively intelligent apprehension. Can it be that anything in the Scriptures should be the plainer for Spiritualism? Certainly, and no great wonder either. How many various understandings there are of the New Testament—Catholic, Trinitarian, Arian, Unitarian, Calvinistic, Arminian, and five, ten, twenty others! There can only one of them be right absolutely, and probably there is not even one. Such various understandings of the same book, argue the obfuscated state of theology, and argue too the probability that theologians differ from one another so variously, for something else than the letter of the Scriptures, and indeed because of something which more or less they all lack, and which, in full strength with them, would be "the unity of the Spirit," and because largely of the general infectiousness of the anti-supernaturalism of the times. But as has been already remarked, it is such a state of things at present, that even "the unclean spirits" mentioned in the New Testament, if made certain by analogy or any other way, and even though of the same class as the "dumb and deaf spirit," would yet simply as being known of, be of great use to wanderers in the field of theology, bewildered as it now is.

Spiritual rappings have been derided as mere materialism; but only, however, by persons who must have been intensely materialistic, without knowing it. For an intelligent rapping or word by a spirit, suggests to a spiritually-minded man, that there must be channels and conditions, through which a spirit can partially return into nature, and also that possibly there may be some human beings, who may be spiritually acted upon, as well as tables. Then too, it is said that Spiritualism is worthless, as a subject of thought, because the spirits never tell what was not known before. But no matter how stupidly it may be done, if a spirit can show himself at all, he does the

greatest thing of the age on this earth, for he returns by a door, where theology has said that there was no opening.

And now again let it be said that all this, which may seem novel and startling on the first reading, is yet nothing strange, if read in the spirit of the Scriptures, and by the light of history.

Spiritualism dated even as of Rochester origin, is of infinite importance to the state of mind, which denies its possibility. But to the mind which believes it, it may be very mischievous, or at best, may minister to a poor, low kind of spirituality, apart from the philosophy connected with it, and which involves in its completeness, both modern science and ancient history, and the experiences of almost every primitive tribe, and also which appeals to the New Testament, as to the discerning of spirits, and which strengthens itself as to its positions, by the history of the Christian Church, while it was in conflict with heathenism.

In manner, there is a great likeness between the mistakes respectively of some men of science and some adepts of Spiritualism—between philosophers with telescope and microscope—who think that they know all about God, because of their having searched out some of his ways; and Spiritualists, who think that they know all about the spiritual universe, from having a few spirits to talk with. And in neither of these classes do the professors remember the limitations under which they learn. For through a telescope, God is not seen, but only the divine way of handling dirt. And through spiritual mediums, there is communication with the spiritual universe, but only as to the first step perhaps on an endless flight; and on which step also, it is as Henry More said two hundred years ago, "There are as great fools among spirits as ever there have been in this world."

By the necessity of things, the best effect from the spiritual world cannot ordinarily result, from such communications as departed spirits can ever word, though even they may themselves rank with seraphs in wisdom; but it must come from such thought as may be quickened in good minds, well prepared by education, and by faith in the Holy Spirit, with a willingness to wait for it and to trust it. And in the same manner, however mysterious may be the way of it, the first true thought of God in any soul, is by revelation; for it is a flash of light in the mind, or it is a sudden terror of the conscience, or it may be, that it is an infinite yearning of love. But whatever it may really be, it is a something with very different qualities from anything which can enter the mind through the tube of a telescope, or be started in the understanding, purely by science.

There have been many outbursts on the world, which have been in a general sense, like what is now called Spiritualism. Such was the movement which began with George Fox. Such also was the commencement of what is called Shakerism, and such, though in a manner less strongly marked, were the beginnings of the people called Irvingites, of some thirty years ago, and also of the Franciscans, who are an order of friars in the Catholic Church. But indeed these are instances out of a multitude of such things, which might be cited at will, from history, ancient and modern, and from the experiences of the last thirty years.

Through George Fox, "the Spirit" was a rebellion against that formalism of thought into which Englishmen began to fall, soon after the Reformation. And whatever else it may be, the Spiritualism which is commonly supposed to have begun at Rochester, is a witness against the materialism to which men were inclining to succumb, under the undue influence of science. And indeed as to these things, there actually is a philosophy, and which is none the less sure, for being only distant akin to mineralogy or ichthyology.

There are two sides to a thunder-storm, what is below, and what is above, as to state. And similarly as to this earthly world; and from the spiritual world above, with which there is human connection, there are effects to be experienced and even perhaps to be incurred, by laws which act through human want; and which may be not unlike perhaps to the demands of a decaying region below, on an atmosphere above, and which get answered by thunder and lightning and sanitary good.

Electricity is generated in more ways than one, as by the spontaneity of nature, by artificial contrivances, and by what may be called accidental causes. And so spiritual fire may be flashed on a man from above; or it may be caught from another like a flame; or it may burst from some heart, like spontaneous combustion, and like the experience of the Psalmist, "My heart was hot within me, while I was musing, the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue."

The recent revival in the North of Ireland, like twenty other revivals, was an outburst of spiritual power, by which many hundreds, and even perhaps thousands of souls, were acted upon in a way, by which they manifested many things, in curious analogy, with the phenomena of Spiritualism. Why was this? and if that revival were a reality, and Spiritualism be not an imposture, why were not the two things exactly alike as to their effect? Simply, because the people concerned were not the same people in the two matters, and

were not looking in one and the same direction. Pressure on a man bodily may vary in many ways, and so may pressure on a man spiritually. And perhaps the connections and susceptibilities of a man through his spirit, may be innumera- bly many more than through his body.

The Spirit, as it came on Samson, was one thing, for result ; and as it came upon Paul, it was another ; though to both, it was from the same God the visitations were made.

In an age characterized by an infestation of "unclean spirits," exorcism was an appropriate manifestation of power superhuman or extra-natural. And if to-day, tables are tipped, or danced about, or made to seem intelligent, contrary to the laws of nature, it may be because of what has seemed right to spirits, perhaps at no great height above this earth, and far below the step, on which the seraphs stand in rank about the throne of God. Or it may be, that table-tippings and similar things, are even directly concurrent with the designs of Providence, and are to be accounted as means, whereby the minds of men may be exorcised and freed from fascina- tion by the laws of nature, which, though true enough for men as mere mortals, are not the half of the truth for them as immortal souls.

And if through some mediums, Spiritualism should seem to stand apart from Christianity, and therefore to be strange and portentous, then let an incident in the Gospels be considered, and let it be noticed how easily the confidence of a Christian ought to transcend even the heroism of mere honesty. "And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name ; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not ; for he that is not against us, is for us."

PROFESSOR HUXLEY AND SIR DAVID BREWSTER ON SUBJECTIVE SENSATIONS.

By THOMAS BREVIER.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY in his Lessons in Elementary Physiology, (an excellent little text book for teachers and learners in boys' and girls' schools), in treating of what are called subjective sensations, and which he tells us may be brought about "by the influence of the body ;" remarks :—

"Many persons are liable to what may be called *auditory spectra*—music of various degrees of complexity sounding in

their ears, without any external cause, while they are wide awake. I know not if other persons are similarly troubled, but in reading books written by persons with whom I am acquainted, I am sometimes tormented by hearing the words pronounced in the exact way in which these persons would utter them, any trick or peculiarity of voice, or gesture, being, also, very accurately reproduced. And I suppose that every one must have been startled, at times, by the extreme distinctness with which his thoughts have embodied themselves in apparent voices.

"The most wonderful exemplifications of subjective sensation, however, are afforded by the organ of sight.

"Any one who has witnessed the sufferings of a man labouring under *delirium tremens* (a disease produced by excessive drinking), from the marvellous distinctness of his visions, which sometimes take the form of devils, sometimes of creeping animals, but almost always of something fearful or loathsome, will not doubt the intensity of subjective sensations in the domain of vision.

"But that illusive visions of great distinctness should appear, it is not necessary for the nervous system to be thus obviously deranged. People in the full possession of their faculties, and of high intelligence, may be subject to such appearances, for which no distinct cause can be assigned. The best illustration of this is the famous case of Mrs. A. given by Sir David Brewster, in his *Natural Magic*.

The chief points of this famous case Professor Huxley proceeds to quote; and in concluding it, remarks—"It should be mentioned that Mrs. A. was naturally a person of very vivid imagination, and that, at the time the most notable of these illusions appeared, her health was weak from bronchitis and indigestion."

I give the narrative in full as it is related by Sir David Brewster; some of the incidents omitted by Professor Huxley being as interesting and significant as any part of the case.

1. The first illusion to which Mrs. A. was subject was one which affected only the ear. On the 26th of December, 1830, about half-past four in the afternoon, she was standing near the fire in the hall, and on the point of going up stairs to dress, when she heard, as she supposed, her husband's voice calling her by name, "—— Come here! come to me!" She imagined that he was calling at the door to have it opened, but upon going there and opening the door she was surprised to find no person there. Upon returning to the fire, she again heard the same voice calling out very distinctly and loudly, "—— Come, come here!" She then opened two doors of the same room, and upon seeing no person she returned to the fire place. After a few moments she heard the same voice still calling, "—— Come to me, come! come away!" in a loud, plaintive, and somewhat impatient tone. She answered as loudly, "Where are you? I don't know where you are;" still imagining that he was somewhere in search of her: but receiving no answer she shortly went up stairs. On Mr. A.'s return to the house, about half an hour afterwards, she inquired why

he called to her so often, and where he was; and she was, of course, greatly surprised to learn that he had not been near the house at the time. A similar illusion, which excited no particular notice at the time, occurred to Mrs. A. when residing at Florence about ten years before, and when she was in perfect health. When she was undressing after a ball, she heard a voice call her repeatedly by name, and she was at that time unable to account for it.

2. The next illusion which occurred to Mrs. A. was of a more alarming character. On the 30th of December, about four o'clock in the afternoon, Mrs. A. came down into the drawing room, which she had quitted only a few minutes before, and on entering the room she saw her husband, as she supposed, standing with his back to the fire. As he had gone out to take a walk about half-an-hour before, she was surprised to see him there, and asked him why he had returned so soon. The figure looked fixedly at her with a serious and thoughtful expression of countenance, but did not speak. Supposing that his mind was absorbed in thought, she sat down in an arm chair near the fire, and within two feet at most of the figure, which she still saw standing before her. As its eyes, however, still continued to be fixed upon her, she said, after a lapse of a few minutes, "Why don't you speak, —?" The figure immediately moved off towards the window at the further end of the room, with its eyes still gazing on her, and it passed so very close to her in doing so, that she was struck by the circumstance of hearing no step nor sound, nor feeling her clothes brushed against, nor even any agitation in the air. Although she was now convinced that the figure was not her husband, yet she never for a moment supposed that it was anything supernatural, and was soon convinced that it was a spectral illusion. As soon as this conviction had established itself in her mind, she recollected the experiment which I had suggested, of trying to double the object; but before she was able distinctly to do this, the figure had retreated to the window, where it disappeared. Mrs. A. immediately followed it, shook the curtains and examined the window, the impression having been so distinct and forcible that she was unwilling to believe that it was not a reality. Finding, however, that the figure had no natural means of escape, she was convinced that she had seen a spectral apparition like those recorded in Dr. Hibbert's work, and she consequently felt no alarm or agitation. The appearance was seen in bright daylight, and lasted four or five minutes. When the figure stood close to her, it concealed the real objects behind it, and the apparition was fully as vivid as the reality.

3. On these two occasions Mrs. A. was alone, but when the next phantasm appeared her husband was present. This took place on the 4th of January, 1830. About ten o'clock at night, when Mr. and Mrs. A. were sitting in the drawing room, Mr. A. took up the poker to stir the fire, and when he was in the act of doing this, Mrs. A. exclaimed, "Why there's the cat in the room!"—"Where?" asked Mr. A. "There, close to you," she replied. "Where?" he repeated. "Why on the rug to be sure, between yourself and the coal scuttle." Mr. A., who had still the poker in his hand, pushed it in the direction mentioned. "Take care," cried Mrs. A. "take care, you are hitting her with the poker." Mr. A. again asked her to point out exactly where she saw the cat. She replied, "Why sitting up there close to your feet on the rug. She is looking at me. It is Kitty—come here, Kitty!" There were two cats in the house, one of which went by this name, and they were rarely if ever in the drawing room. At this time Mrs. A. had no idea that the sight of the cat was an illusion. When she was asked to touch it, she got up for the purpose, and seemed as if she were pursuing something which moved away. She followed a few steps, and then said, "It has gone under the chair." Mr. A. assured her it was an illusion, but she could not believe it. He then lifted up the chair, and Mrs. A. saw nothing more of it. The room was then searched all over, and nothing found in it. There was a dog lying on the hearth, who would have betrayed great uneasiness if a cat had been in the room, but he lay perfectly quiet. In order to be quite certain, Mr. A. rung the bell, and sent for the two cats, both of which were found in the housekeeper's room.

4. About a month after this occurrence, Mrs. A., who had taken a somewhat

fatiguing drive during the day, was preparing to go to bed about eleven o'clock at night, and, sitting before the dressing glass, was occupied in arranging her hair. She was in a listless and drowsy state of mind, but fully awake. When her fingers were in active motion among the papillotes, she was suddenly startled by seeing in the mirror a figure of a near relation, who was then in Scotland, and in perfect health. The apparition appeared over her left shoulder, and its eyes met hers in the glass. It was enveloped in grave clothes, closely pinned, as is usual with corpses, round the head, and under the chin, and though the eyes were open, the features were solemn and rigid. The dress was evidently a shroud, as Mrs. A. remarked even the punctured pattern usually worked in a peculiar manner round the edges of the garment. Mrs. A. described herself as at the time sensible of a feeling like what we conceive of fascination, compelling her for a time to gaze on this melancholy apparition, which was as distinct and vivid as any reflected reality could be, the light of the candles upon the dressing table appearing to shine fully upon its face. After a few minutes, she turned round to look for the reality of the form over her shoulder; but it was not visible, and it had also disappeared from the glass when she looked again in that direction.

5. In the beginning of March, when Mr. A. had been about a fortnight from home, Mrs. A. frequently heard him moving near her. Nearly every night as she lay awake, she distinctly heard sounds like his breathing hard on the pillow by her side, and other sounds such as he might make while turning in bed.

6. On another occasion, during Mr. A.'s absence, while riding with a neighbour, Mr. —, she heard his voice frequently as if he were riding by his side. She heard also the tramp of his horse's feet, and was almost puzzled by hearing him address her at the same time with the person really in company. His voice made remarks on the scenery, improvements, &c., such as he probably should have done had he been present. On this occasion, however, there was no visible apparition.

7. On the 17th March, Mrs. A. was preparing for bed. She had dismissed her maid, and was sitting with her feet in hot water. Having an excellent memory, she had been thinking upon and repeating to herself a striking passage in the *Edinburgh Review*, when, on raising her eyes, she saw seated in a large easy chair before her, the figure of a deceased friend, the sister of Mr. A. The figure was dressed, as had been usual with her, with great neatness, but in a gown of a peculiar kind, such as Mrs. A. had never seen her wear, but exactly such as had been described to her by a common friend as having been worn by Mr. A.'s sister during her last visit to England. Mrs. A. paid particular attention to the dress, air, and appearance of the figure, which sat in an easy attitude in the chair, holding a handkerchief in one hand. Mrs. A. tried to speak to it, but experienced a difficulty in doing so, and in about three minutes the figure disappeared. About a minute afterwards, Mr. A. came into the room, and found Mrs. A. slightly nervous, but fully aware of the delusive nature of the apparition. She described it as having all the vivid colouring and apparent reality of life; and for some hours preceding this and other visions, she experienced a peculiar sensation in her eyes, which seemed to be relieved when the vision had ceased.

8. On the 5th October, between one and two o'clock in the morning, Mr. A. was awoke by Mrs. A., who told him that she had just seen the figure of his deceased mother draw aside the bed curtains and appear between them. The dress and the look of the apparition were precisely those by which Mr. A.'s mother had been last seen by Mrs. A. in Paris in 1824.

9. On the 11th of October, when sitting in the drawing room, on one side of the fireplace, she saw the figure of another deceased friend moving towards her from the window at the farther end of the room. It approached the fireplace, and sat down in the chair opposite. As there were several persons in the room at the time, she describes the idea uppermost in her mind to have been a fear lest they should be alarmed at her staring, in the way she was conscious of doing, at vacancy, and should fancy her intellect disordered. Under the influence of

this fear, and recollecting a story of a similar effect in your work on *Demonology*, which she had lately read, she summoned up the requisite resolution to enable her to cross the space before the fireplace, and seat herself in the same chair as the figure. The apparition remained perfectly distinct till she sat down, as it were, in its lap, when it vanished.

10. On the 26th of the same month, about two p. m., Mrs. A. was sitting in a chair by the window in the same room with her husband. He heard her exclaim, "What have I seen?" And on looking at her, he observed a strange expression in her eyes and countenance. A carriage and four had appeared to her to be driving up the entrance-road to the house. As it approached, she felt inclined to go up stairs to prepare to receive company, but, as if spell-bound, she was unable to move or speak. The carriage approached, and as it arrived within a few yards of the window, she saw the figures of the postilions and the persons inside take the ghastly appearance of skeletons and other hideous figures. The whole then vanished entirely, when she uttered the above mentioned exclamation.

11. On the morning of the 30th October, when Mrs. A. was sitting in her own room with a favourite dog in her lap, she distinctly saw the same dog moving about the room during the space of about a minute or rather more.

12. On the 3rd December, about nine p. m., when Mr. and Mrs. A. were sitting near each other in the drawing-room occupied in reading, Mr. A. felt a pressure on his feet. On looking up, he observed Mrs. A.'s eyes fixed with a strong and unnatural stare on a chair about nine or ten feet distant. Upon asking her what she saw, the expression of her countenance changed, and upon recovering herself, she told Mr. A. that she had seen his brother, who was alive and well at the moment in London, seated in the opposite chair, but dressed in grave clothes, and with a ghastly countenance, as if scarcely alive. Such is a brief account of the various spectral illusions observed by Mrs. A.

I cite the foregoing account from two of the most eminent authorities of the present age in matters of science, as the best explanation which science has to offer on this interesting subject, and especially as the highest "Philosophy of Apparitions," which science has to give. It is given in full, notwithstanding its length, that it may lose none of its force. If Natural Philosophy is adequate to explain all the phenomena which the world hitherto has regarded, and for the most part still regards, as supernatural, so be it. It is not we, the Spiritualists, who wish to shun the light or to shirk any facts, new or old, or from any quarter. Our quarrel is not with science but with the men who, speaking in the name of science and claiming its authority, stubbornly ignore or deny facts which run counter or seem to do so to their theories, and lead to conclusions which some among them seem as though they would fight to the death sooner than acknowledge. In certain matters they are the staunchest of Pre-Baconites. They will on the high *à priori* ground insist on determining beforehand what is possible and what is impossible, what can and what cannot happen; they have set up stakes and boundaries within which all are free to labour and to learn, but which may not be passed; just as the clergyman may inquire and teach freely within the articles he has subscribed, but is liable to be deposed if he goes beyond or counter to them.

To facts concerning beetles and butterflies your hard-headed scientific men will pay every attention, but too often they have no ear nor heart for facts which most nearly concern men as evidencing their true inner nature and immortal life. For facts of this class they have no respect, and are utterly regardless of their own rules of uncaring experiment and induction. One who is no mean authority on both the physical and spiritual nature of man, has remarked:—"Evidence on spiritual subjects is regarded as an impertinence by the learned; so timorous are they and so morbidly fearful of ghosts. If they were not afraid they would investigate; but nature is to them a churchyard, in which they must whistle their dry tunes to keep up their courage."

I hope that Spiritualists may be preserved from this fatuity, and that they will strive to make themselves as familiar with the points which may be thought to tell most heavily against them as with those which they deem most convincing and conclusive in their favour.

It is difficult to fix the precise moment when darkness ends and light begins. No one knows better than Professor Huxley how hard it is to draw a sharp line between the vegetable and the animal kingdoms, between man as a physical being, and the higher members of the animal kingdom immediately below him; or between reason on the one hand and instinct on the other. And yet between all these there are certain broad and plain distinctions so clear that the simplest minds perceive and comprehend them. So with regard to man—having both a physical and a spiritual nature, being an inhabitant of the two worlds of matter and of spirit, and sustaining subtle and intimate relations with both, we find, and naturally expect to find, phenomena constantly presenting themselves which stand doubtfully to us between the two, sometimes apparently interwoven, or running the one into the other, and so perplexing the judgment, and rendering it difficult to determine whether the facts in question are in their origin and order natural or supernatural.

Now it is to phenomena of this class that the philosophers who in their theories exclude spiritual causation and spiritual agency, concentrate all their attention, hoping that by tracing these facts to purely physical origin, they may stretch their net so as to gather within it all facts which at points may bear a superficial resemblance to them; and so shut out the spiritual altogether. This is like inferring that because some of the anthropoid apes have the *hippocampus minor* in common with man, that *therefore* man is only the natural development of the anthropoid ape.

That there are instances of spectral illusion and of purely

subjective sensation no intelligent Spiritualist we suppose would question. We have no occasion to press into the service of Spiritualism cases at all of an ambiguous or doubtful nature: nor am I aware that Spiritualists at all insist upon them. Let the professors, if they will, take the entire collection, and make the most of them; as indeed they are in the habit of doing. For this "famous case of Mrs. A." and the kindred one of Nicolai the Berlin bookseller, are the stock cases which come round in all their essays on the subject with the unfailing regularity of clown and pantaloon in the Christmas pantomimes. We are sometimes reminded that ghost stories are generally related by believers in them, and that some allowance should therefore be made for their bearing in that direction. To whatever extent this consideration applies, it has equal force applied the other way to such cases as those of Mrs. A. and of Nicolai, which are evidently narrated and have been repeated with the object of damaging as far as possible all belief in supernatural appearances. As admitted by Sir David Brewster, in the letter on Natural Magic, from which the account of Mrs. A. is quoted by Professor Huxley—"When we describe extraordinary and inexplicable phenomena which we believe to be the result of natural causes, the mind is prone to strip them of their most marvellous points, and bring them down to the level of ordinary events." Perhaps some confirmation of this may be seen in the different explanations of Professor Huxley and Sir David Brewster of the examples cited by both. The former, as we have seen, quotes "the famous case of Mrs. A." as "the best illustration" that "people in the full possession of their faculties, and of high intelligence, may be subject to such appearances (illusive visions) for which *no distinct cause* can be assigned; while Sir David Brewster distinctly affirms that "in the case both of Nicolai and Mrs. A. the immediate cause of the spectres was a deranged action of the stomach;" and a few pages before, in speaking of "the state of Mrs. A.'s health when she was under the influence of these illusions," he couples "a disordered state of the digestive organs," with her having "naturally a morbidly sensitive imagination."

That the senses as well as the judgment may sometimes deceive us, by conveying wrong impressions to the mind, especially in cases of *delirium tremens* and other states of nervous derangement or of organic and functional disorder, is one of those common-places of which it is sometimes useful to remind us, and which is particularly suitable in a text-book for boys and girls; but in any serious discussion its value depends entirely on the application made of it and its pertinence to the matter in hand. Of course, Professor Huxley, in the work

from which we have quoted, does not pretend to shew that the "famous case of Mrs. A." has any bearing on the question of the reality of spiritual apparitions—a question which in such a treatise would have been obviously out of place, though we are not sure that there is not an *arrière pensée* in this direction; but the object of Sir David Brewster, in bringing forward this case is confessedly that "we may arrive at such a degree of knowledge on the subject (of spectral apparitions beheld by a person of sound mind in the broad light of day) as to satisfy rational curiosity, and to strip the phenomena of every attribute of the marvellous;" and by the marvellous it is evident that Sir David here means the supernatural; and he quotes Dr. Hibbert as having "shown that spectral apparitions are nothing more than the ideas or the recollected images of the mind, which in certain states of bodily indisposition have been rendered more vivid than actual impressions." And for nearly half a century philosophers, great and small, and other persons not philosophers at all, in writing on ghosts and spectral illusions, have been incessantly ringing the changes on the cases of Mrs. A., and Nicolai, and the Spectre of the Brocken; as if in quoting these the whole subject was disposed of.*

Now I confess I cannot see the sense, or even the honesty of this course, except on the plea that these writers know no better—that they are ignorant of notorious facts, and which it much concerns them to know; and without a knowledge of which, whatever their attainments in other respects may be, they are not competent even to enter upon the discussion of the question. No one acquainted with the literature of Spiritualism can have any pretence for asserting that Spiritualists rest their case on the experiences of persons suffering from disordered stomach, *delirium tremens*, or deranged nerves; or that they attach significance to such instances as "the famous case of Mrs. A." Why then all this display of cheap bravery—this beating of the air? Why do not our learned professors and men of science

* Whether an abnormal physical state be the efficient cause, of spectral apparitions, or whether this simply furnishes the conditions that favour the power of spirits to manifest their presence, it is not necessary, even were we able, to determine. But there is another possible solution which our professors do not seem even to have considered. It is well known to those who have paid attention to these things, that clairvoyants and psychometrists see frequently not the actual objects they describe, but impressions or images which they affirm those objects have made, and which would seem to be indelible. In a paper on "Psychometry" (*Spiritual Magazine*, No. 9, Vol. V.), I have given instances of this. I only refer to it now, incidentally, to shew that there are possibilities and facts undreamt of by modern philosophy, but which nevertheless have their place, and an important one, in the system of things, and which a large-minded and higher philosophy, not "afraid of a large number of important facts" must at some time take into its account.

fairly grapple with the *genuine* and weighty facts which bear on the point, instead of valorously slaying the dummies and sham giants set up for that express purpose? Until they do this, I must commend their case to the consideration of Professor De Morgan for his next Bundle of Paradoxes as a choice example of that species of false reasoning known as the *ignoratio elenchi*. They are keen sportsmen who choose partridges for their sport, but after a day's hard shooting bring home only a brace of harmless cock-sparrows.

I would start the right game for them in the hope that it may, perhaps, help to save the recurrence of so mortifying an experience; and to the end that in the future their fire may be rightly pointed; or (to drop metaphor), I propose to remind them of a few well-known instances illustrating the kind of evidence which intelligent Spiritualists regard as having a direct bearing on the question.

Perhaps (for who knows what may happen in these days of the "march of intellect") some distinguished professor may hereafter—say in the twenty-second century—have a glimmering that the old familiar well-worn precedents referred to do not exhaust the inquiry, and coming to it with fresh interest and open mind may make his induction on the basis of a larger and more accurate knowledge,—may learn from a careful survey of the whole field of observation to discriminate between the spiritual beings who at times make their presence visible or audible among us, and the ghosts evoked by a disturbance of the digestive apparatus. I imagine our professor to be a man more anxious for truth than for reputation, seeking to know something more of the nature of man than can be learned by counting his bones, and placing the white and gray matter of the brain under his microscope; anxious to know whether any basis exists for a true science of pneumatology, and to whom the independent existence and active powers of the human spirit freed from mortality, and the possible relations it may still bear to the world in which its mortal life was passed, and the all but universal belief of all generations of men, are not questions so trifling and silly as to merit only a sneer; but subjects to which the best powers of the mind and the fullest investigation may be worthily devoted. To this future professor I humbly suggest a consideration of the following among other instances as supplying reasonable tests of the truth of alleged spiritual manifestations, and of the sufficiency or insufficiency of the theories to account for them on purely physical principles which the earlier scientists have put forward.

Sir David Brewster draws particular attention to, and pointedly insists on, the state of health of the patient in con-

nection with spectral and auditeral illusions; "as the spectres seen by Nicolai and others had their origin in bodily indisposition." Let us, then, take the case of one to whose experience no objection on the score of bodily indisposition can be alleged—a man, moreover, accustomed to careful observation, of mature judgment, highly disciplined by scientific training and long experience in practical affairs. Such a man was Swedenborg, the eminent mathematician, philosopher, theologian, and man of business,—an abstemious, methodical, matter-of-fact man; with a mind ripened by a practical knowledge of all the science of his time, in the full possession of all his faculties,—a man of sound mind in a sound body; and, withal, most scrupulously faithful to the exact truth, even to the smallest particulars. Well, for the last thirty years of his life, Swedenborg habitually saw and conversed with spirits, and has given us very copious "Memorable Relations of things heard and seen" by him. With his dying breath, after partaking the sacrament, in answer to a question put to him, he solemnly asserted the truth of what he had written; and (as we shall see) there is most conclusive proof that he was not the victim of hallucination. I can only briefly refer to one or two instances in point, referring the reader for others to a full and able Life of Swedenborg, by William White.

Jung Stilling relates that an intimate friend of his, a merchant of Elberfeld, "who would not have dared for all the world to tell an untruth," called upon Swedenborg, and in conversation mentioned the proofs he had heard of Swedenborg's intercourse with spirits, and expressed the wish to have a similar proof for himself. Swedenborg was willing to gratify him. The merchant then said, "I had formerly a friend who studied divinity at Duisburg, where he fell into a consumption, of which he died. I visited this friend a short time before his decease; we conversed together on an important topic; could you learn from him the subject of our discourse?" "We will see. What was the name of your friend?" The merchant told him his name. "How long do you remain here?" "About eight or ten days." "Call upon me again in a few days; I will see if I can find your friend." The merchant took his leave and despatched his business. Some days after he went again to Swedenborg, in anxious expectation. The old gentleman met him with a smile, and said, "I have spoken with your friend: the subject of your discourse was, *the restitution of all things*." He then related to the merchant with the greatest precision, what he, and what his deceased friend had maintained. "My friend," (says Stilling) "turned pale, for this proof was powerful and invincible."

Another instance evidencing the reality of Swedenborg's claim of seeing and conversing with spirits is the following:—

In 1761, Louisa Ulrica, Queen of Sweden, received a letter from the Duchess of Brunswick, in which she mentioned that she had read in the *Gottingen Gazette*, an account of a man in Stockholm, who pretended to speak with the dead, and she wondered that the Queen, in her correspondence, had not alluded to the subject. The Queen had no doubt heard of a remarkable instance of the exercise of this power by Swedenborg which had just occurred in her capital, and had made a great sensation. This coupled with her sister's desire, made her wish to satisfy herself by an interview with Swedenborg. Captain de Stahlgammer (who regarded Swedenborg's "belief in the apparition of spirits," as "the only weakness of this truly honest man,") is the one out of many authorities whose narrative of what passed at that interview I here present:—

"A short time after the death of the Prince of Prussia, Swedenborg came to Court (being summoned thither by the Senator, Count Scheffer). As soon as he was perceived by the Queen, she said to him, "Well, Mr. Assessor, (he was the Assessor of the Board of Mines) have you seen my brother?" Swedenborg answered 'No;' whereupon she replied, 'If you should see him remember me to him.' In saying this, she did but jest, and had no thought of asking him any information about her brother. Eight days afterwards, Swedenborg came again to Court, but so early that the Queen had not left her apartment called the white room, where she was conversing with her maids of honour and other ladies of the Court. Swedenborg did not wait for the Queen's coming out, but entered directly into her apartment and whispered in her ear. The Queen, struck with astonishment, was taken ill, and did not recover herself for some time. After she was come to herself, she said to those about her, '*There is only God and my brother who can know what he has just told me.*' She owned that he had spoken of her last correspondence with the Prince, the subject of which was known to themselves alone."

The Chevalier Baylon, relates that in an interview with the Queen, "she told me herself, the anecdote respecting herself and brother, with a conviction which appeared extraordinary to me." M. Thiebault, a French savant of the school of Voltaire, also had the same relation from the Queen herself, M. Merian, and other members of the Academy, being present. Dr. Wilkinson, the biographer of Swedenborg, remarks of this and similar relations:—"Did space permit we could produce a little volume of testimony to the truth of these narratives." The Baron de Grim, an avowed atheist, in relating the anecdote,

passes this judgment on it :—"This fact is confirmed by authorities so respectable, that *it is impossible to deny it*; but the question is, how to believe it." How, indeed, if with Professor Huxley and Sir David Brewster we are to reduce all experiences of this kind to mere "subjective sensations?" There is no question here of bodily disorder, and even if there were, we have yet to learn that a disordered stomach qualifies its possessor to attain a knowledge of the secrets of the so-called dead. "People in the full possession of their faculties, and of high intelligence, may be subject to illusive visions, for which no distinct cause can be assigned," says Professor Huxley; but this is only a candid confession of ignorance of the cause of these appearances, so far as such cases are concerned; a confession which one so learned in many things can well afford to make; and so far he is wiser than Sir David, for ignorance on a particular point, is always, especially in a public teacher, preferable to error. But the study of Swedenborg and Spiritualism is peculiarly adapted to meet this defect, as it assigns the "particular cause," and the only adequate cause to the production of these particular effects.

In the case of the Swedish seer the evidence of sight was corroborated by the sense of hearing, and their concurrent testimony to the objective reality of the spirits whom Swedenborg saw and conversed with, was in certain instances demonstrated by the disclosures they made to him, and which were found in strict accordance with the facts. In the next instance to which I shall refer—that of the Epworth Ghost in the Wesley family,—the sense chiefly addressed was that of *hearing*, though there was evidence of an active intelligent agency, which appealed also to the senses of both *sight* and *feeling*; for besides "loud knocks, groans, footsteps, the rustling as of a silk dressing gown, and other noises; various objects were *seen* to move, sometimes for a 'pretty while' together, though no agent was visible, and thrice an apparition was seen by different persons; Emily Wesley, and her father, were each, at different times, *pushed against* with great force by an invisible power; the latter once with such violence as to be nearly thrown down by it; and the bed on which sister Nancy sat was lifted up with her in it." It was evidently an intelligent agency, for it would imitate Mr. Wesley's particular knock at the gate, and other sounds, repeating them any given number of times, according to request. It was "easily offended;" could be made "angry," and even "outrageous," and, in particular was, more loud and fierce if any one said it was rats, or anything natural. It forewarned of impending affliction, and had decided Jacobite predilections. As to the

evidence for these things, Priestley, who wrote a pamphlet on the subject, considers it, "one of the best attested cases of the kind on record." Dr. Adam Clarke remarks "The accounts are so circumstantial and authentic as to entitle them to the most implicit credit. The *eye* and *ear* witnesses were persons of strong understandings and well-cultivated minds, untinctured by superstition, and in some instances, rather sceptically inclined." "They used" he says, "the utmost care, scrupulosity and watchfulness, to prevent them from being imposed upon by trick or fraud That they were *preternatural*, the whole state of the case and supporting evidence seems to shew." There are five separate narratives of these occurrences written at the time by different members of the Wesley family; besides the diary of the Rev. Samuel Wesley the father, the statements of Robin Brown, the man-servant, and of the Rev. Mr. Hoole, rector of Haxey, "an eminently pious and sensible man;" and lastly, "John Wesley, carefully enquired into the particulars on the spot." He took down what each could testify of his or her own knowledge; and published a narrative of the transactions in the *Arminian Magazine*. Coleridge considered "the true and only solution" of these things to be "a contagious nervous disease," a view which I have fully discussed in an appendix to the *The Two Worlds*; I will therefore only state here, that this contagion must have extended to all the members of the family, including the sleeping children who were awakened by these disturbances, and domestics, as well as an occasional visitor; it even affected the "stout mastiff" who whined, trembled, and sought shelter, even before anything was seen or heard by the family. In this case I particularly call attention to the corroboration of the objective character of the phenomena, furnished by the testimony of so many intelligent, *healthy*, independent eye and ear witnesses. Were their senses of sight and hearing all alike suddenly impaired by this peculiar nervous disease? Was the dog also a nervous subject under the same strange hallucinations?

I confess that the poet's diagnosis seems to me rather a projection from the depths of his own consciousness than an induction from the facts—a conjecture as to what he thinks the cause should or might have been, rather than a well-reasoned conclusion as to what it actually was. That the medical faculty have not sufficiently appreciated the philosopher of Highgate's contribution to pathological science may, perhaps, be partly due to the unavoidable circumstance that it came about a century too late for verification, even by *post mortem* examination. But are there no cases more recent than those of Swedenborg and the Wesleys? Certainly there are: plenty of them. For

instance, there is the case of the double apparition of the spirit of Captain G—— W——, of the 6th Dragoons, killed before Lucknow, and who, on the night of his death, November 14th, 1857, appeared to his widow in Cambridge, and to another lady resident in London; and which apparition was the means of correcting officially an erroneous date in the despatches of the Commander-in-Chief, and of detecting an inaccuracy in the certificate of the War Office. The full particulars of this case, given by Robert Dale Owen in his *Footfalls on the Boundary of another World*, (pp. 299—303), were obtained by him directly from the parties themselves, who, with one exception only, I believe, are still living; and the certificates from the War Office are in his possession.

Still more recent were the supernatural disturbances at the house of M. Joller, a well-known lawyer of Lucerne and a member of the Swiss National Council. M. Joller has published a work of ninety-one pages, giving a full account of them. They consisted of violent rappings and knockings all over the house at all hours day and night. The very wainscot was seen to bend beneath the blows. Sighs, groans, and voices uttering piteous lamentations, and occasionally, music accompanied with singing, in a melancholy tone, were heard. The rappings responded promptly to questions. Doors and windows were no sooner fastened than they would be suddenly flung open, and those standing open would be as suddenly closed. Showers of stones would fall in the rooms where the family were, though without hurting any one. Furniture was moved about, and articles were conveyed from one part of the house to another. The spirits at length boldly showed themselves openly and were seen by different people. M. Joller not only felt a soft stroking on the forefinger of his left hand, but he on one occasion seized a hand of one of the spirits. He found it soft, solid, and warm, as a living hand; and felt distinctly the thumb and fingers, which soon, however, drew themselves away.

Here, again, the hypothesis of illusive sensation is altogether untenable, and even absurd. There was in this instance the combined testimony of *sight*, *hearing*, and *touch*. In the family of M. Joller, "superstition was as it ever had been, a rejected thing." At first, and for a long time, M. Joller was scornfully incredulous, as to spirits having anything to do with the disturbances. Like Sir David Brewster, spirits was the last thing he would give in to; but he had in the end to give in to them; for the unpitying *poltergeists* drove him not only from his scepticism, but from his house. Not till he and his quitted the home which had been in possession of the family for a hundred years did their perse-

cution cease. The subject was the talk, not only of his own little canton, but of all Switzerland; thousands came, and the manifestations went on before them in full force and variety. The house was literally invaded. Shut out at the doors, people clambered in at the windows. Among others who came and investigated, were M. Obermatt, President of the Court of Justice; Judge Schalberger; M. Jann, Police Director; Chancellor Zimmerman; Dr. Jose Deschwarden, learned in Natural Philosophy; Dr. Christen; Land Captain Zelger, Father Guardian, and the Episcopal Commissary Niederberger. It was all of no use: they were as much puzzled as learned, scientific, and reverend men in like circumstances have been before them. Old or young, learned or simple, men of the law, men of the gospel, men of science, all were alike confounded; all when they came to M. Joller's house were alike suddenly afflicted with the same "subjective sensations," and which ceased as suddenly on their leaving the house.

I will cite only one other case—that of Frederika Hauffe, commonly known as the Seeress of Prevorst. Like Swedenborg, she saw spirits when perfectly awake, by day and by night, alone and in company; and whatever her state of health or of mind at the time. Her case is fully related by her physician, the late Dr. Justinus Kerner, chief physician at Weinsberg, a man whose sincerity and good faith has never been impugned even by the most determined sceptic. The abridged translation of his work by Mrs. Crowe, consisting of 350 pages, is one continuous record of spirit-manifestations, many of them of the most convincing kind. It is true that the Seeress (unlike Swedenborg in this respect), was a great invalid, and therefore to avoid all cavil on this score, I rest nothing on her own averments, unless adequately supported by independent evidence and testimony. The spirits seen by her were by some *seen* at the same time, and by others *heard*, when the spirits conversed with her. She would so accurately describe spirits whom in their mortal life she could not have seen or heard of that they would be fully recognised by those who had known them. On the authority of these spirits she would relate facts which had taken place years before. In one instance, she was thus the means of recovering a paper of great value, and so of preventing a great injustice against a widow and her children which would otherwise have been committed; this paper being the only proof extant that the alleged debt of her late husband had been paid. The story is fully detailed by Kerner and by Eschenmayer; it is verified by official papers, and its truth is attested, among other witnesses, by High Bailiff Heyd and Finance Minister Fizer. Frequently, on the spirits visiting

her loud knocks would be heard, and sounds as of the rolling of a ball, the rustling of silk, the patter of feet, and the throwing of gravel; and this not only in her own house, but in the houses of others; in Dr. Kerner's, for instance, where also, as he tells us, "a small table was flung into a room without any visible means, and the pewter plates in the kitchen were hurled about in the hearing of the whole house."

Experiments were made and traps were set to test her truthfulness, and the objective reality of the spirits seen by her; but far from shaking the truth of her statements they only more fully confirmed them. Dr. Kerner says "I visited Mrs. H. at least three thousand times—passed hours and hours with her—was better acquainted with her associates and circumstances than she was herself; and gave myself inexpressible pains to investigate reports, but I never could discover deception." And he himself though at first incredulous, had both ocular and audital evidence of the truth of her statements.

But the point in her case to which I would specially draw attention is this. A few weeks before her death she was attacked with fever, in which state she had experience of those spectral illusions of which Sir David Brewster and others make so much, and seem to think that because some persons experience them in certain states of health, that disposes of the whole question. Well, Mrs. Hauffe had this experience, and what is her testimony, given under circumstances of peculiar solemnity, for it was made to her physician only a few days before her death, and with a full consciousness of the impending change. Dr. Kerner says:—"In one of her last days she told me, *that, during her fever, she often saw visions; all sorts of forms passed before her eyes, but it was impossible to express how entirely different those ocular illusions were to the real discerning of spirits; and she only wished other people were in a condition to compare those two kinds of perception with one another; both of which were equally distinct from our ordinary perception, and also from that of second-sight.*"

Striking as this testimony is, I do not expect that it, or the evidence to which I have referred, or indeed, any evidence, will bring conviction to some minds. Either from natural defect (corresponding to colour blindness), or from education and habit, or the force of those combined, they cannot entertain the belief of the presence and agency of spirits in our midst. Where they cannot altogether ignore facts pointing to that conclusion, they *must* find or make some scientific or *quasi* scientific hypothesis to otherwise explain them. The departed wife of a philosopher wishes to make him sensible of her presence and to commune with him,—it may be communicate something which shall benefit

himself or others. How is she to do it? By what means can the conviction be brought home to him? He sees a luminous form which looks and smiles like her, but that he has learned is an optical illusion. She raps on the walls of his study, or on his table; she speaks to him, touches the strings of the familiar guitar and plays a few notes of her old favorite tune;—that is *auditory spectra*, perhaps arising from a disease of the audital nerves. She moves his furniture, touches his dress, his person,—it is all hallucination: he does not see and feel these things, he only *thinks* so, they are but subjective sensations. While he holds the pen she controls his hand and traces her autograph upon the paper,—that is automatic action. She reminds him of events that were known only to themselves,—that is but past feelings renovated. She informs him of circumstances about to take place, and which take place as she had foretold him,—well, it is only an unconnected coincidence, or perhaps cerebral sensing. In short, do what she will, she finds, alas! that she is disappointed, baffled; her husband is so great a philosopher and so scientific that all converse with him has become impossible. It is vain to hope that any facts or arguments I can adduce will make any favourable impression upon minds thus strongly fortified against them. I can only appeal from such minds to others who, if less versed in physical science, are also less fettered by theories, and more open to the recognition of the possibility of a spiritual science which transcends physics,—to those who are not deterred by any peril to reputation from the investigating that which is unpopular and despised, and from accepting and avowing it if upon fair investigation it is found to be true. And I do so appeal. I appeal to those who are not afraid of that terrible person Mrs. Grundy—not the ignorant vulgar Mrs. Grundy, but the more solemn and stately apparition of Mrs. Grundy in blue spectacles,—the presiding genius of Royal Societies and British Associations, and literary and scientific journals which talk in such fine phrases of “this enlightened Nineteenth Century.” From the doctors and professors who sit under the shadow of her awful presence, I appeal to you, O liberal large-minded professor, in “the good time coming,” and to all who value truth more than theory, or the idle opinion of the hour, to pursue this enquiry in an impartial, judicial spirit—so that your judgment may not be unduly swayed by theories formed in a closet, or by facts irrelevant to the real issue but that as true and honest men; you give your verdict in accordance with the evidence before the Court.

PASSING EVENTS.—THE SPREAD OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

THE Committee of the Dialectical Society, under the able presidency of Dr. James Edmunds, continue their sittings for the purpose of receiving evidence of the reality of what the initiated believe to be spiritual manifestations. They have had before them men of high character and, in some instances, of literary and scientific attainments; and a mass of testimony has already been obtained from the witnesses, who have spoken only of their personal experiences, which if fairly reported must establish beyond all reasonable doubt that the phenomena of which we Spiritualists speak *are real*, and are not to be explained away by the idle babblings of uninformed men who repeat stereotyped stupidities and attempt to mislead the public by discrediting the *facts*. "Facts are stubborn things;" and when, as in this case, they are fully proved, and opponents like the young journalist who boasts that he would rather explain the phenomena by "taking refuge in collusion, deception, self-revelation, and rats,"* are set at rest, what will this Committee do with them? Many of the leading members—unhappily for

* This is the climax at which the writer of a leading article in the *Echo*, of June 9th, arrives; and the editor must be heartily ashamed of the lieutenant to whom he entrusted the duty of attacking the fortress of Spiritualism. This writer says, that "human credulity is stronger than demonstration," and straightway proceeds to "try it on" with the readers of the *Echo*, by writing an article which, where it is not absolutely puerile and illogical, is entirely untrue. If the editor is content to accept the responsibility of such articles, and the spirited proprietors of that useful journal think it will add to its reputation, as well as profit, so much the worse for the public who trust in the teachings of the *Echo*. But I protest against a policy which is neither fair nor honest journalism! These anonymous attacks are indeed but a species of literary Fenianism, which strikes a covert blow and gives the victim no chance of defending himself. If you, Messrs. Editor and proprietors, make capital by allowing attacks such as the one in question, upon a subject of such wide-spread interest, whereby the circulation of your paper is immensely increased, you should, at least, allow men whose intelligence and character are assailed by a tissue of mis-statements to be heard in reply. But this, it appears, you will not do. Mr. Varley has written a letter to you which, though you admit "is able and interesting," is too long forsooth for insertion; though I know it would not have occupied so much space as the article of which I complain, and which would have been refuted at once by Mr. Varley's "able and interesting letter." This is what I feel justified in denouncing as ungenerous and unjust, and is a course of proceeding which I am sure the respectable firm who own the *Echo* would not sanction in their general dealings with the public. Is journalism, then, freed from moral responsibilities? *Echo* answers,—"'Tis."

themselves—are strongly imbued with materialistic philosophy, and yet they will have no alternative but to admit and to plainly assert that the phenomena are not to be attributed to the disordered imaginations of men like De Morgan, Robert Chambers, William Howitt, Alfred Wallace, the Wilkinsons, and Cromwell Varley; but whether these sceptical members of the Committee ever realise them or not by their own experiences, they cannot tell the body of Members of the Dialectical Society that these wonderful facts, which the press of this country and the Faradays, Brewsters, and Tyndalls, have derided and denounced are other than solemn verities, and that the believers in the spiritual origin of these facts are neither fools, tricksters, nor madmen! Then again, I ask, what will they do with the facts? It would indeed be an impotent conclusion to admit their reality and leave them unexplained. That we know has been done before! It will not do either to take refuge in the exploded theory of the late Dr. E. C. Rogers who, in his work, "*The Philosophy of Mysterious Agents*," attributed the phenomena—physical and intelligent—to a cerebral or mental action of the medium—that is to say, that a table could be raised to the ceiling of the room, as I have seen it, or a fact unknown to the medium or the enquirer, as Mr. Varley testifies, can be explained by a mere unconscious action of the brain. Nor will it do to adopt the theories of several who followed Dr. Rogers, viz., Professors Mahan, Dr. Samson, Mr. Charles Bray, and others, who, as stated in Mr. Sargent's recent work, "*Planchette, or the Despair of Science*," adopted the apneumatic or *no-spirit* view in regard to the phenomena, who have done little more than either to put in a new and expanded form the arguments of Dr. Rogers, or to substitute for his notion of Baron Reichenbach's odic force the simple hypothesis of nervous action. None of these opponents of the spiritual theory deny the facts. Professor Mahan says, "We admit the facts claimed by the Spiritualists. We admit the facts for the all-adequate reason that after careful inquiry we have been led to the conclusion that they are real. *We think that no candid enquirer who carefully investigates can come to any other conclusion.*" So that if the Committee of the Dialectical Society should come to the same conclusion, they will be fortified against the probable sneers of the Press and some of their own members by several men eminent in science who have years ago gone over the same ground. "The facts being admitted," Mr. Sargent says, "Professor Mahan finds in Reichenbach's odic force the mysterious agent by which they are manifested. But it is somewhat remarkable that Reichenbach himself modestly disclaims for it all such power as these writers attribute to it."

I am myself unable to say whether the Baron disclaimed it before or since Rogers and Mahan published their theories. I am disposed to think it is since, and that the Baron's ideas were greatly enlarged after his visit to this country, where in my presence he obtained the first evidence of Spiritualism. Dr. Ashburner, one of the earliest and most consistent advocates of Spiritualism in this country, invited me to meet Baron Reichenbach at his house, and the after-dinner conversation, chiefly carried on between the Doctor and the Baron, partly in German (for the latter could not speak English fluently), was upon Spiritualism; and I believe I am right in saying that the Baron was at that time a sceptic. Dr. Ashburner had a small room prepared so as to exclude every ray of light, and in the evening the elder and the younger Mrs. Marshall were sent for, to try if we could obtain a manifestation of the odic lights. In this experiment we did not succeed; but the usual rapping sounds which accompany these and other mediums were heard, and greatly interested the Baron, who asked a question in German, and receiving an affirmative reply he proceeded to call over the alphabet in German, when he was told that the spirit of his wife was present. He then asked in German for her name (which was Friedericke), and the letters, "R I C K E" were given, which pleased and surprised the Baron, as that was the familiar abbreviation by which he was accustomed to call his wife, pronounced "Rika" I think.* At this sitting, two heavy plaster busts were taken from a shelf, high above our reach, and placed by the spirits upon the table.

To return to the proceedings of the Committee, who, as I have said, have had before them many witnesses, the most notable of whom is Mr. Cromwell Varley, both from his standing as an electrician and from the fact that most of his experiences have been obtained through the mediumship of his wife. His narrative, which was listened to with the deepest interest and occupied the entire evening, is much too long to repeat in this place. It will doubtless be published in full in the Committee's Report, and I shall, if the whole be not reprinted in the *Spiritual Magazine*, make some extracts from it at a future time. Mr. Varley explained that he was first led to a serious consideration of the subject, by exercising his power as a mesmerist upon the lady who afterwards became his wife. She was at that time

* Mr. Sargent in his book, *Planchette*, p. 240, on the authority of Mr. D. Hornüng, of Berlin, erroneously gives this *séance* as having happened at the residence of the Hon. Mr. Cowper, and connects it with incidents which took place at a subsequent *séance* at that gentleman's house. Ricke was, as I understood, the Baron's wife, and not his sister; but I may be mistaken in that particular.

suffering from an affection of the lungs, and obtaining the consent of her mother and herself, he tried to relieve her by mesmeric passes; during the process, frequently repeated, she became clairvoyant, and was accustomed to speak to him in the third person, minutely describing the nature of the disease, and directing him how to treat his patient *i.e.*, herself; she often went into an involuntary state of trance, and ultimately he was told through her own lips whilst in this abnormal condition, that a crisis was at hand which would be life or death; that she was to be carefully watched, and treated as he, the spirit who had charge of her should direct. Mr. Varley was then told to obtain certain specified medicines, to apply them when the emergency arose, and that at 28 minutes past five o'clock on a particular day the crisis would occur.

Having from previous experience entire faith in the fulfilment of the prediction, he became nervous of the responsibility cast upon him, and begged that he might have the assistance of the family doctor. But this was sternly objected to, and he was enjoined not to mention the revelation to his wife nor to any member of her family. He set his watch by Greenwich time, and awaited with much anxiety the issue. The day arrived, and precisely at 28 minutes past five o'clock, his wife became entranced and violently convulsed, and threw up a quantity of mucus, produced by the bursting of the gathering on her lungs. He applied the restoratives which he had ready prepared; she gradually revived and ultimately recovered from a disease from which she had been suffering for years; she has had no relapse, and is now in robust health.

Mr. Varley also related an incident which occurred to him in America. He was unacquainted with any of the Spiritualists in New York; as an entire stranger, he called upon a bookseller and made a purchase of some books on Spiritualism. From him Mr. Varley obtained the names of several professional mediums upon whom he called; each corroborated the statements made by the other in matters affecting his state of health, but one of them a Mrs. Manchester, volunteered a statement which very much surprised him. She said that she was impressed to tell him, that since he had left England, a dispute had arisen respecting a contract he had made before leaving London, and that by the next steamer, he would receive important legal documents which would require his immediate attention. He knew nothing of the fact, had no thought that such a thing could occur, and of course Mrs. Manchester could not by any ordinary means have known it. But on the Wednesday following, he received a letter from his solicitor, informing him of a legal difficulty which had arisen, and of the necessity of his

immediate attention to the documents sent with it, by which Mrs. Manchester's spiritually impressed statement was fully verified.*

Of Mr. Varley, with whose views upon the general subject, apart from the spiritual origin of the phenomena, I do not concur, I may say I think he exhibits, considering that he is still a young man in active intercourse with men of science who no doubt "poke fun at him," a boldness and an outspoken honest frankness, which commands our highest respect; and it is to be hoped that his example may be followed by others who have not yet mustered courage to proclaim the truth to a sceptical world. Of the other witnesses who have come before this committee, I have reason to know that Mr. Thomas Shorter, whose brief but lucid statements, and his ready philosophic replies to the questions which were put to him, made a most favorable impression, and materially advanced the truth.

Mr. H., with whom I am acquainted, and who is engaged in commercial pursuits in the City, gave interesting evidence of his experiences with crystal seers. He had been a student of the spiritual philosophy he said, for more than 45 years, and was perfectly convinced of its truth. He considered that crystal seeing was a phase of Spiritualism, and a very reliable one. He had found that the faculty of seeing in crystal balls (of which he showed some beautiful specimens), and the mirror, was mainly with females, but of all ages from 7 to 70, and of all conditions—ladies of sylph-like form, and others of corpulent proportions. He had received through various mediums in this way, many thousand spiritual messages and answers to questions, forming 30 volumes of manuscript. Mr. H. gave an instance to prove the reliability of this power. Captain Burton the well-known African traveller, had made a visit to Mr. H. before he left England, on his celebrated pilgrimage to Mecca, which it is known that he accomplished in the disguise of a Mussulman. Some time after his departure, Mr. H., through a young seeress, wishing to know something of him, had the whole scene described in which Captain Burton was at that time engaged. The girl spoke of the spot as a sandy desert with a few trees; she said she saw a dark looking man dressed in shawls and turban, smoking a pipe. Another man came up and they quarrelled; she then recognized that one was Captain Burton, who had taken his revolver to defend himself against his assailant's dagger. At this moment, a third person

* The writer in the *Echo* laughs at Mr. Varley, for supposing there is anything more in it than any gipsy woman at Norwood could predict.

on horseback rode up and separated them, and no harm was done. Mr. H. made a record of this exactly as the medium had described. Some months after, Captain Burton called upon him, read the description, said it was true in every particular, and at once signed his attestation of it in Mr. H.'s book which he still has. In reply to a question put by Mr. Serjeant Cox, Mr. H. said he was satisfied that the mediums saw what they described, and that it was not to be attributed to imagination, as proved in the verified case of Captain Burton. The *messages*, he said, came as if written or printed in the mirror, and, in some cases, characters were so small, that they could only be deciphered by the use of a strong magnifying glass, seen, however, only by the medium, as he himself had not the faculty; but the same medium, a young uneducated girl, would at times read Hebrew characters, and treat upon metaphysics.

Mr. Manuel Eyre said he had 17 years' experience, and had seen in America some very marvellous manifestations, and, in one instance, he had seen a piano lifted up and played upon by the spirits. He was requested by some friends in America to find a register of baptism in this country, and he searched in vain for it through two counties. He was at length told by a spirit that he could get it through Mrs. Marshall. He went to her with a number of questions written out and numbered, and in reply to the one pertaining to the register, "Stepney Church" was spelt out. Being a stranger, he had never heard of Stepney, and asked if there was such a place. He went to Stepney Church, and there he actually found the register for which he had been hunting for three months.

One of the members of this committee, Mr. Serjeant Cox, is a believer in animal magnetism and electro-biology, (the power which an operator has of forcing his will upon another and making him believe that he sees, tastes, or feels that which he does not see, taste, nor feel!) and Mr. Cox has pressed this idea, to account for what many of the witnesses say they have positively seen. He admitted, however, in reply to a counter question which I put to him, that he himself could not be fooled in that way. But he is a barrister-at-law, a man of erudition, quick witted, and not yet a Spiritualist; and hence his immunity from those delusions which more common-place men fall under.

It is twenty-five years since I became convinced of the reality of mesmeric phenomena, of catalepsy, trance, clairvoyance, and biology; and I well remember that the same denials were made then by the scientific world; the same sneers and jeers from the clever fellows who pretend to teach the multitude; the same cries of imposture and delusion which has met the advent

of modern Spiritualism and its phenomena. And now, when very few men are to be found who disbelieve in mesmerism, it is not perhaps known, it is at all events not admitted, that Spiritualism has let the world into *that* secret. With these recollections, I cannot doubt but that Spiritualism, which has spread within a very few years more rapidly than any other *ism*, will ere long be the accepted belief of every wise and thoughtful man.

In the words of Dr. Hallock let me impress upon the minds of the scientific members of the Dialectical Society that "Spiritualism is no new problem which ought to have taken the disciples of science by surprise; it has rapped at the door of every thinker throughout the ages for a solution. Wanting it, the popular thought, misdirected by a theology that was stone blind, and which still remains so, has invested the immortality of its own faith with *grave-clothes*, and converted it into a *scare-crow*;—transforming the most beautiful and sublime process, whereby humanity is glorified, into a ghastly skeleton which its ignorance has named death, and converted it into an object of the profoundest horror. It was for science to strip these rags from the immortal spirit! Why has it not been done?"

And, again, in the eloquent words of the same writer, I will ask those who blindly oppose this great truth, "Is there not profound significance in the fact that the thing will not be killed? Whole asylums of the insane have been hurled at its head. All the usual means heretofore so effective in sending the devil to the right-about, have been applied in vain. Newspaper bullets have been fired at it from every rampart that could conceal a foe; the heavy ordnance of science and sectarianism, loaded with 24-pound theories, crammed to the muzzle with the grape and canister of ridicule, slander, and denunciation, have been brought to bear against it in the open field: and all to no purpose, save to injure the leaders of this furious onslaught, by the recoil of their own artillery."

I have, I am happy to say, established very kindly relations with several members of the Committee of the Dialectical Society, and especially of those who commenced the investigation in strong antagonism to Spiritualism. I feel sure that, at the close of their labours, their doubts and prejudices upon this subject will, at least, be greatly modified. That they will accept the Spiritual theory, I do not expect! That they *must* admit the facts, I have already said; and, in common with all Spiritualists, I shall look forward with great interest to see what they will do with them, and what they will say as to their own previous denial of them.

THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY AND MR. VARLEY.

MR. VARLEY has written the following excellent letter to the *Eastern Post* :—

“ Sir,—My attention has been drawn to a report of my evidence before the committee of the Dialectical Society in a recent number of your issue. I request, in the cause of truth and fairness to myself, that you will publish the following.

“ Upon the earnest request of several members of the committee I reluctantly consented to help them in their attempts to get to the bottom of those phenomena called ‘ Spiritual,’ on the understanding that nothing was to be published without my consent, and until I had an opportunity of revising the reporters’ notes. Believing that I was, in a measure, before a private committee, I detailed a great many things of a personal nature, which related to the alleged phenomena, and I have to complain of these things being put before the public. The very nature of the subject, the most extensive and intricate with which the mind of man has ever had to deal, makes it one which the general public cannot understand, and the attempt of your correspondent is of necessity incomplete.

“ My statements, which referred to the relations between the known physical forces and those phenomena which the Dialectical Society is inquiring into, are either omitted or abbreviated.

“ My real statement about Mrs. Manchester was to this effect :—

“ I had recently arrived in New York—was then acquainted with no Spiritualist in America, but had heard before-hand in England much of the clairvoyant power of certain people who work at it as a profession. I called at the office of a seller of Spiritual books, where I was wholly unknown, made a purchase, and asked where these media were to be found; receiving then the addresses of five or six, I determined to see whether they could describe my condition of health, as a test of their powers. I called upon three of them in succession; they all told me correctly the state of my health, and Mrs. Manchester volunteered information that I should have important legal documents, &c., by next mail. Now, I had had no communication with my solicitors since my arrival in the States, expected none at the time, and was greatly surprised at the contents of my solicitors’ communication when it arrived. I received this information by clairvoyance on the Monday, and on the following Wednesday it was confirmed by the mail from England.

“ This was a case in which collusion was impossible. The

entranced medium could not have obtained the information by reading my thoughts, because no such thoughts were in my head. All persons acquainted with the labours of Dr. Elliotson and Dr. Ashburner are aware that clairvoyants often have the power of reading the thoughts of others. This I have repeatedly tested for myself.

"I was careful to explain to the committee of the Dialectical Society how necessary it was in this intricate investigation not to rely upon one's own evidence, unless it is supported by collateral proofs, it being so easy for the unwary to be deceived, or to deceive themselves.

"I gave cases in which I and others at a distance from each other, and neither of us expecting any communications, had simultaneously the same news from the communicating power.

"I have never courted publicity—on the contrary, have avoided it as much as possible, and have only volunteered to detail the results of my investigations, extending over a period of more than twelve years, when people anxious about the matter have pressed me to help them. The fate of Socrates, Galileo, Baron Reichenbach, Dr. Elliotson, Dr. Ashburner, Dr. Grey (who is now the leading physician of New York), and many others, is sufficient warning to all not to avow publicly convictions dissonant with popular prejudices.

"The day has gone by for the infliction of social persecution upon those who investigate the facts of the material universe. Human knowledge has progressed during the last fifty years to such an extent that he seems ridiculous who attempts to indicate any boundary beyond which man's intellect will never be able to pass. Who would have believed, in the commencement of this nineteenth century, that light, chemicals, and lenses, would produce portraits, that anybody could travel from London to Glasgow in a comfortable carriage in ten and a half hours, or that messages could be rapped out from London to San Francisco on the one hand, and to China and India on the other, in less than an hour? I have sent a message from London by my own hand direct to Omsk, in Siberia, and received an answer back in less than three minutes. This message was rapped out by electricity in Siberia in a manner not much unlike that by which 'spiritual' communications are often transmitted by sounds through living media, the only difference being that while in the former case the power used has received the name of 'electricity,' and the channel that of 'metal wire,' in the latter case the power has not as yet been christened, its nature is not understood, and its medium of communication is only partially known.

"In my communication to Dr. Tyndall, who had requested a detailed description of some of the phenomena I had seen, I

told him the subject was not ripe for publication, even for scientific men. If the reading portion of London residents could be polled I don't think you would find five per cent. of them acquainted with the ordinary phenomena of somnambulism, the odic force, and mesmerism, and until one is somewhat familiar with these it is impossible to comprehend the much more intricate phenomena comprised under the names of clairvoyance and Spiritualism.

"You can scarcely select hap-hazard a dozen families, without finding one or two members of them who have received at the moment of the death of some near relative a communication announcing the fact at a distance. These communications are often made by the dying person appearing to some member of the family at the moment of passing away. The death-moment seems the most easy one in which to make such communications. Notwithstanding the enormous number of such cases, some of them supported with such striking collateral proof as to remove all doubt, the possessors of such information are afraid to narrate these interesting facts except under the seal of confidence, because the world at large ridicules that which it does not understand.

"In Plato's divine and moral works, subject 'Theages' or 'Wisdom,' Socrates tells Theages—'I have had by the favour of God, ever since I was born, a genius that always accompanies and governs me. This genius is a voice which, whenever it speaks to me, always diverts me from what I have a mind to do,' and much more to the same effect. Socrates boldly told the truth, and for exposing the superstition of the day was killed, but not until he had demonstrated, on the morning of his execution, the immortality of the soul.

"Joan of Arc, who led the French successfully against our soldiers, was burnt to death, not because the English were beaten, but because she declared that she was instructed by a voice from an unseen intelligence which she called 'God,' and as her conscience would not allow her to recant she was burnt, and as the flames approached her she exclaimed, 'Yes, my voices were from God!'

"Galileo, who taught that the earth rotated on its axis and revolved around the sun, only saved his life by going down on his knees and recanting.

"These are sufficient warnings of the state of public opinion respecting those who have the courage to avow a knowledge of facts, dissonant with popular prejudices.

"Wesley, the founder of a religion bearing his name, was a witness of the spiritual phenomena called raps, which occurred in a marked manner in his own family, one or more of whom

were rapping media. All the details are perfectly authenticated by documents written and signed upon the spot, and many of the facts will be found in *Southey's Life of Wesley*. Swedenborg, again, a scientific writer of no small power, had most remarkable experiences as a conscious clairvoyant.

"In the case of the Seeress of Prevorst many instances are given, attested by declarations of medical men and state functionaries, of remarkable phenomena similar to many I have personally witnessed. Dale Owen's list of cases in his *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* are well worth perusal.

"The Indian Government some years since caused an official inquiry to be made into the reality of certain mesmeric phenomena among the natives, and the result of the inquiry confirmed the truth of the facts of mesmerism. Notwithstanding all these and many other existing records of unusually well authenticated cases, it is surprising how few people in this country have attempted to inquire into or know anything about the subject. I know many medical men who, when the study door is locked, freely and earnestly discuss these matters, and tell their own experiences, but at the same time confess that they dare not open their mouths to others, fearing the fate of Dr. Elliotson, who lost a practice of thousands a year for telling the truth.

"How many are there in London who know of the existence of the Mesmeric Hospital? In the spiritual works, of which there are hundreds of volumes, principally of American authorship, and kept in stock only in this country as far as I know by Mr. Burns, of Wellington Road, Camberwell—in these works the nomenclature is greatly at fault. The word 'spirit' is most frequently used to express that which Plato meant by the word 'soul,' and the word 'magnetism' for the power by which a person is entranced or influenced by some other person. But the upper end of a large piece of rock-crystal produces the same action upon many people, and the force is not magnetism. The word 'electricity' is used to express a great many unnamed scarcely recognized powers, which operate in plants, animals, and men. 'Time' and 'space' are frequently referred to to express metaphorically 'correspondencies' which we are unable to comprehend, though having some distant relation thereto. Spirits of higher intelligence than ourselves seem not to know of space and time in our sense of these words, hence the student of such literature is sorely perplexed at first.

"Notwithstanding the vastness of the field of inquiry, there are certain facts which almost any one can with care and patience establish.

"1st. That those who have died so far as the flesh and blood body is concerned, do still exist, and can under certain conditions

make known to those still in the earthly body that they live and retain their identity and individuality.

"2nd. That the next stage of our existence is one of progress—rapid with those who have been kindly natured and active here, and who act up to the law promulgated by Confucius 2,300 years ago, and adopted by every great subsequent lawgiver, namely—'Do you unto another what you would that that other should do unto you.' Progress is slow with those who have been brutal, slanderous, and guilty of high crimes causing great suffering, such, for instance, as that imperfectly expressed by the phrase 'sharp practice.'

"3rd. It further *seems to be beyond doubt* that in man's next stage of existence he is unable to conceal his true nature, his body in that state being formed of what was his memory in this life. The whole of his acts and thoughts, while on earth, are constantly before himself and his neighbours so long as the consequences of these acts and thoughts remain in action.

"In conclusion, when I was pressed by the Dialectical Society to explain to them the results at which I had arrived, I cautioned them not to accept them as anything better than the merest conjectures or attempts at hypotheses. That spiritual phenomena exist, any man possessed of common sense can prove for himself by experiment. The best existing explanation of them is probably as wide of the truth as alchymy was from chemistry; nevertheless, the pursuits of the alchemists have in the form of chemistry led to the production of much more wealth than entered into their wildest dreams, and the discoveries of some of the causes of contagious diseases have already lengthened the average term of human life. I have yet to learn that it is irrational to endeavour to discover the causes of unexplained phenomena, and no amount of adverse public opinion will deter me in my endeavour to clear up this question.

"I am, Sir, yours truly,

"June 6th, 1869."

"C. F. VARLEY.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHS.

THE letter from the *New York Tribune*, signed W. D. L. (an evident misprint for W. D. G.), which appeared in our last number, is from the pen of Professor Gunning, one of the ablest geologists of America. The tintype to which he refers was shewn to us by him when he was in London about three years

ago. He also related the circumstances under which he obtained the spirit-portrait of his deceased wife with his own photograph from a photographer who was a stranger to him, and who was even more astonished than himself at its appearance on the plate. The likeness was beyond question. On subsequently visiting a medium who knew nothing of the circumstance, he received a communication from his wife that she had impressed him to go to the photographer in order that her portrait might be taken for him, as the conditions at that time were particularly favourable for the purpose.

We may notice here that *The British Journal of Photography* (which has treated this subject on the whole with commendable fairness), in an article on "Spiritual Photography," in its number of January 29th, points out means by which an image once impressed on the glass may be resuscitated, and by which any number of "spirit" pictures may be made to appear in the finished picture. To do this, it is only necessary that either before or after the exposure in the camera, the figure which it is sought to be made to appear should be printed on the iodized plate from a transparency with an opaque ground. An exposure to the light of a candle or gas flame for a few seconds suffices to produce the image. "In this way we once, to the profound amazement of a clerical friend, took a portrait of him which, when developed in his own presence, showed him supported on the right by the Apollo Belvidere, and on the left by the Greek Slave."

This explanation is however based on a misconception of the subject. That images once made on a glass may be reproduced, and that, secondly, figures may be made to appear, has been well known from the first; and were this all, no intelligent Spiritualists would ever have regarded such pictures as spirit-photographs. What they affirm, and what on the trial of Mr. Mumler was *proved by sworn evidence*, and is shown by other testimony is, that a *correct likeness of deceased persons* has frequently appeared on the plate along with the portrait of the sitter. On an imperfectly cleaned plate, or, we believe on any plate, an image once impressed may by successive discharges of electricity, and possibly by other means, be reproduced; but by no art of the photographer can the correct portrait of a deceased person be given under the conditions under which spirit-photographs have been obtained. To those who have carefully read the evidence given on Mr. Mumler's trial, we need scarcely point out that it was sworn in evidence that spirit-photographs had been obtained where no portrait or image of the person existed, on plates never previously used, without artificial aid, and with the whole process carefully watched by very competent observers.

THE LONDON CONFERENCES.

This series of Conferences was brought to a conclusion on Monday, May 31st, with the unanimous thanks of the audience to the chairman, committee, and the several speakers; and with a small balance in hand with which to re-open them during the ensuing winter. The audiences have been good, and the interest well sustained from the beginning. They have elicited many interesting experiences, and much valuable argument and testimony. The success which has attended this experiment, and the spirit of enquiry it has stimulated has led to meetings and lectures in other parts of the metropolis, and to the introduction on a similar plan of monthly conferences at Manchester. There are many places where Conferences on Spiritualism might with great advantage be introduced. Many persons would be thus induced to relate and compare experiences which would not otherwise be given, and when the various bearings of the subject might be considered. This would prepare the way for lectures, books, and publications, and the formation of spirit-circles for experimental investigation.

Probably the Committee of the London Conferences would be willing during the recess to correspond with those who may wish to hold Conferences on Spiritualism in other places, and are desirous of information, and to assist them in any other way that they may be able.

HENRY JAMES ON THE WOMAN QUESTION.

By all who know him well, Mr. James will be regarded as an essayist and metaphysician who has no superior in America, and a most vigorous master of the English tongue. We learn from the *Advertiser* that he read a lecture recently to a select circle, in which he gave his views on the woman question, and it may interest our readers to know what is said by a profound and original thinker upon that theme.

Mr. James said: Undoubtedly, if I do not greatly misinterpret history, women are destined henceforth to be a leading and no longer a servile force in human affairs. But then that issue will take place only by their becoming more and more feminine, and less and less masculine. If women were themselves as sagacious as men are, to discern their inbred and overflowing divinity of nature, they would do their best to enhance rather than obscure every evidence of that merely intellectual inequality of theirs with men, which, while it insures man's priority in mere worldly, material or professional respects, leaves woman

herself sacred with the halo of every distinctively spiritual or personal charm. Men's professional activity has been of immense service doubtless to the progress of civilization; but the legitimate prestige thus attached to it is now fast deserting it. Citizenship, to the illustration of which all our professional activity is directed, and which means the *regime* of outward law in human affairs, is a low conception of human destiny when measured against society or fellowship, which means the *regime* of inward freedom or attraction. And if this is so, and no thoughtful person will say me nay, how untimely an aspiration it would be on the part of woman to enlist in the professions!

"I think it an excessively shabby thing on the part of men to keep up any of the statutory disabilities that continue to stigmatize women's free activity, or debar them from any civic, any political, or any professional franchise they may choose to covet. This pusillanimity on men's part grows to some extent out of the essentially low conception of human destiny which has hitherto prevailed upon the earth, and which has left men blind to the divine side of our nature; but to a greater extent out of the instinctive dread men feel of women becoming like themselves. Men know to the very marrow of their bones how consistent the greatest civic, political, or professional eminence is with the most arrant meanness and poltroonery in all human regards; and, when women threaten to become parsons and attorneys and politicians, they naturally enough feel that all that still sanctifies humanity is going by the board. I have no doubt the fear is honest, but I believe it to be altogether chimerical. For assuredly women's future will never belie their past. If they have been womanly in the past, they will be vastly more so in the future, when their emancipation from the tyranny of men will leave their instincts free to assert themselves. I have no fear that women, save in very small squads, will ever flock to the polls; for their bare admission to equality with men, in this function, will evince so improved an honesty on the part of men, that we may be sure rival parties will above all things take care in constructing their platforms that the feminine interest and honor be amply vouched."

SPIRITUALISM IN THE LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE.

By the provisions of a legislative act of Louisiana to provide a revenue for the support of the State Government, the Spiritualist mediums, inhabitants of the State, are compelled to pay a license of one hundred dollars. This most unjust provision of the law has recently been brought prominently before

the attention of the Legislature, in a petition from Messrs. W. R. Miller and E. F. Simon, who have thoroughly exposed the flagrant injustice of such a statute, illustrating their views in a direct and forcible manner, and asking for the immediate repeal of a restraining act of such wrongful operation on a large class of the population. The petitioners proceed to say that, "considered in its true light, Spiritualism is a religion, the belief or unbelief in which pertains solely to the individual conscience of man, and as such cannot be taxed in a country of free and enlightened people any more than Catholicism, Methodism, or any other religious denomination." They likewise remind the Legislature of Louisiana that the State law is in conflict with the refusal of Congress, on a direct proposal, to impose any tax upon Spiritualists.

The petitioners proceed further as follows:—

Now it may be that the framers of this law, imposing a tax or license upon Spiritualists, had only in view the class of persons called *healing mediums*, and if so your petitioners would respectfully represent that it was done without due consideration of the merits of the case. It is of public notoriety that thousands of diseased persons, whose cases have been despaired of and abandoned by the regular physicians, have been relieved and cured by the prescriptions and the laying on of hands of healing mediums. It is also a well-known fact that this class of mediums never exact any fee, and many refuse to receive the payment their services would justly entitle them to, and that those who have relinquished all other occupations to devote their whole time to this God-like mission of philanthropy have been sustained only by the precarious bounty of some grateful patient.

In consideration of those facts your petitioners must be excused for saying that the legislators who would unwittingly tax these imitators and followers of Jesus, would, with equal propriety, have taxed Christ himself and his Apostles, in their time, for performing similar acts. Your petitioners are well aware that much imposition has been practised upon the public under the name of Spiritualism, but they would further represent that they are now organized into a regular corporate body, styled the "Central Association of Spiritualists of Louisiana," organized under an act of the legislature of this State, approved May 14th, 1855, entitled "an act for the organization of corporations for literary, scientific, religious and charitable purposes," and that by the provisions of section three of article three of said charter, they are empowered to grant letters of fellowship to such of their members as they shall find worthy; and that by this provision all impositions may in future be prevented, and all impostors unmasked.

They would further represent that a grateful public can bear witness to the benefits conferred upon suffering humanity by healing mediums, and that to prevent them, by taxation or otherwise, from fulfilling their philanthropic and charitable mission, would result in great injury to the poorer class, who, unable to pay the high fees of regular physicians, avail themselves of this method of freeing themselves from the ills to which they are liable.

They therefore propose an alteration of the law, so as to exact no license from healing mediums duly accredited by the Central Association, who shall not take fees, and thirty dollars from those who do; with different arrangements for such as do not hail from the Central or other Spiritual Associations of the State of Louisiana.

THE PRESS.

During the past month the *Echo* has again made itself conspicuous by not only sneering at the whole subject of Spiritualism, but by casting ridicule on the observers of its facts, and opprobrium on all who call themselves mediums, who are in all cases impostors. This is the tone of a well-considered article which recently appeared, and probably from the pen of Mr. Arthur Arnold, who is the principal editor of the paper. Now, it happens that that gentleman has a brother, Mr. Edwin Arnold, a distinguished literary man, respecting whom we violate no confidence in saying that he is a well-known and acknowledged Spiritualist. This, of course, his brother, the editor of the *Echo*, is aware of, and yet he thinks he can afford to let his paper be the organ for such a charge, which, if it be true, makes out his own excellent brother to be either a noodle or a rogue. Besides this, Mr. Jeffery, one of the proprietors of the *Echo*, is one of the more active of the committee of the Dialectical Society, and not only specifically admits that his views on the subject have been materially enlightened in favour of the facts, but by the repeated adjournments of the committee, and the many witnesses examined, Mr. Jeffery conclusively shews that there is a substantial case to inquire into. It would be much better for him to remind his editor, Mr. Arthur Arnold, of this, and to prevent him from longer misleading the public. He should, at all events, either tell the truth or hold his tongue.

 SPIRITUALISM IN NORWOOD.

THE *Norwood News* of May 22, under the head "SPIRITUALISM," has the following article:—

"Although we do not for the present propose to re-open our columns to the discussion upon the subject of Spiritualism, the following account of a *séance*, held on Monday, the 10th inst., at Mr. Jones's house, Enmore Park, will probably be interesting to many of our readers.

"Mr. Jones had invited to his house to meet Mr. Home, Dr. Cresswell, Mr. A. Bremner, of Albert Road, South Norwood, the Proprietor of the *Croydon Advertiser*, and the Editor of this Paper; and upon the evening in question, a lady, a friend of Mr. Jones's, Mr. Home and Mr. Jones were also present. The

room in which the party assembled was large and well lighted, the light being sufficient to see the maker's name upon a watch in very small characters. Having been shown some spirit-drawings and portraits, we were invited to inspect the table which was to be operated upon. It was a somewhat heavy mahogany dining table, on four legs, and with brass castors. We were allowed to move it about, and there certainly appeared to be no secret mechanism in the table itself, or in any way connected with it. The cloth having been removed from the table, we all sat round it, our hands resting on it, and entered into conversation upon various subjects. Mr. Home sat in an easy unconstrained manner, joining in the conversation, at times moving his hands from the table, and generally apparently unconcerned.

"After sitting for some ten or fifteen minutes, a slight vibration of the table was felt, and then raps were heard, apparently on various parts of the table. These raps were heard for some time, sometimes more and sometimes less distinct; they were heard also when Mr. Home's hands were off the table. The sceptics (Dr. Cresswell, Mr. Bremner, Mr. Ward, and ourselves) looked in turn under the table at Mr. Home's legs and feet during the continuance of the sitting, and they were quite motionless. The table then rose slightly off the ground and moved up to the persons sitting at one end and the other, and the raps becoming more distinct Mr. Home stated that a message was about to be given. One of the party repeated the alphabet, and as the letter required to be used was named, raps were heard. The following words were thus formed:—'WE DO ALL THAT WE CAN TO CONVINCE YOU THAT WE LIVE, AND THAT GOD IS LOVE.' At each letter of the name of God a tremulous motion of the table was perceptible.

"At Mr. Home's suggestion one of the sceptics asked that the table should be made light, and to his surprise when he placed his hand under the edge of the table it moved up as lightly as a sheet of paper. He then said, 'Please let it be heavy,' and it required considerable exertion to move it off the ground. Each of the sceptics tried this experiment in turn, and with the same result. Two of them then went with Mr. Home into another room where there was a heavy mahogany loo table on a pillar and claw, and immediately they placed their hands on it, it tilted from one side to the other; and when Mr. Home was sitting some three feet away from it, it moved about two feet in the opposite direction to that in which Mr. Home was sitting. The table became very light and very heavy by turns, and oscillated violently without shaking off a small statuette standing under a glass shade in the centre of it. The chairs also moved, and the

room appeared to shake, whilst raps were heard on the walls, the windows, and on the table itself. Returning to the other room, the whole party sat again round the table, and an accordion of Mr. Jones's, which had been previously inspected by the sceptics, was observed to rock upon the table; and Mr. Home, having asked whether the spirits wished to play upon it, and being answered in the affirmative, he held the accordion at arm's length by the lower end of it (that is, not the key end) under the table, one of the sceptics moving his seat so that he could observe the movements of the accordion. The accordion then commenced playing, and the 'The Blue Bells of Scotland' being mentioned by Mr. Bremner, a bar or two of that air was played; then Mr. Jones asked for some echoes, and a series of echoes proceeded from the accordion with remarkable precision and a very beautiful effect. Some louder strains then proceeded from the accordion, and Mr. Home held the accordion close to the feet of the writer hereof, so that he could feel the keys moving up and down against his feet. Mr. Ward was asked to look under the table; he did so, and saw the accordion playing—Mr. Home only holding it by the reverse end, and with one hand, his other hand being upon the table. The accordion then ceased playing, and repeated raps being heard, the alphabet was called over, and the following words spelt out: 'We regret that we can do no more.'

"We do not intend to enter upon any speculations as to the cause of the manifestations we have related. We are not believers in Spiritualism, although we confess ourselves totally unable to discover the cause, or the motive power of what we here relate. Mr. Home was at times sitting away from the table when raps were heard and movements felt. The accordion he certainly only held by one hand. We were allowed to watch him as closely as we pleased. He did not fix his attention upon any of us, or we might have imagined ourselves under mesmeric influence. We were permitted to examine the furniture, to move it about, to make any remarks, and to ask any questions we pleased. We were perfectly sober. Some tea and coffee had been served out—the writer partook of none; and we are as we have said, utterly unable to say from what cause or by what power the various incidents occurred. We can only say that they certainly happened very nearly as we have recorded them, and we have to thank Mr. Jones and Mr. Home for their courtesy towards us. We went to Mr. Jones's house disbelieving his statements of fact: we saw phenomena which were sufficient to shew us that all he has related could occur by the same power, whatever that power may be."